

S-E-C-R-E-T

23 January 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Smith

SUBJECT : Shortcomings of NIE 11-14-68

1. We have completed an estimate of Soviet general purpose forces which is a far better piece of finished intelligence than its recent predecessors. We have coordinated a more coherent and objective US Position Paper for the NATO basic estimate based on it. Despite improvement, however, both papers fall sadly short of frankness and objectivity.

2. No one should entertain the notion that this estimate "cuts the Soviet threat to NATO down to size." This year's estimate, in fact, increases the threat in aspects which weigh heaviest in military planning. The previously postulated threat to the Central Region of NATO of "80 Warsaw Pact divisions in three or four weeks"

These caveats may assuage our

academic consciences, but they do not significantly alter the

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Next 14 Page(s) In Document Exempt

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